

VICHARASETHU

(THE PATH OF INTROSPECTION)

Vol. 12

MAY & JUNE 1978

No. 8 & 9

O man, what represents the wealth and glory you so much crave for? Friends, money and health are no doubt worthy, but they can enrich only the bodily life of ours. The mind will still crave for its own welfare. Of all the things that enrich the mind, devotion to the Almighty and the Wisdom of the Soul come first and last. Devoid of them, even the most resourceful will remain a bankrupt. True fulfilment will never be his, any time.

—Swamiji

NARAYANASRAMA THAPOVANAM

P. O. PARALAM, VIA. AMMADAM — 680 563

TRICHUR DIST. KERALA.

Phone: Cherpu 363, Trichur 89363

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TO THE READER

Due to the pressure of work at the Asram and an injury and a boil on Swamiji's fingers, the May issue of Vicharasethu could not be brought out in time. A combined issue is being brought forth hence.



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(THE PATH OF INTROSPECTION)

AN INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE

DEVOTED TO UNIVERSAL DHARMA AND PEACE

Vol. 12

MAY & JUNE 1978

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Talk at Jamshedpur — 1977 - (Gita 9th Chapter)

(Continued from page 13, April '78 issue)

Mayi te teshu chapyaham

I am in them and they are in Me—this is what I have to say about those who take to devotion with exclusiveness and delight. Does my statement surprise you, Arjuna? True, this denotes that they and I are one or their worship has succeeded in making Me one with them. Well, that is the unique effort of *bhakti*, the great achievement which *bhakti* gains for the earnest devotee. Devoid of *bhakti*, any kind of ritual, any order of worship, is ineffective. Alas, many seekers do not realize this!

What is this *bhakti* which makes the devotee one with God, with his ideal?

Worship and prayers many take to as a routine, may be by habit and tradition or even by option. Devotees have even made a big subject of worship. They have laid down a number of rules, restraints, and what not to govern the practice of prayers and worship. In some cases the rules and disciplines are so cumbersome that a good many of earnest devotees are not

able to observe them scrupulously. As a result, they feel denied the sublime benefits of worship.

But all these rules and regulations may help the devotee to grow in devotion, they may not also. For devotion, its essential nature, depends upon the heart and mind of the seeker, his feelings and pulsations. By *bhakti* I mean that basic factor, potential and wholesome, which links the devotee with God inwardly through an emotional undercurrent. When this emotional current begins to flow, the thought of God assumes a new vigour. It brings in a sense of 'living' relationship, giving rise to the feelings of need and satisfaction. Like the food that we take every day to provide nourishment to the body, the devotional thoughts and their expression become indispensable to the heart and mind. Devoid of devotion, the devotee starts feeling he cannot live even for a day.

He does not feel there is any distance to God, nor is God to him an object or entity to be imagined. All the barriers are lifted from his mind, doubts and speculations cease once for all. As an emotion his devotion becomes strong. Definiteness and clarity dawn in his intelligence, and there arises a greater and greater cohesion between his intelligence and mind.

Unlike the earlier rules and restraints governing his worship and prayers, the spontaneous thoughts of sublime devotion fill his mind with softness, love, compassion and a sense of friendliness with all. Formal worship remains a formality, but the informal *bhakti* grows and shines in its intensity and brilliance, giving joy and satisfaction to himself and harmony to one and all. The world with its open drama on the one side, its Creator unmanifest on the other, his mind feels a natural pull towards the Creator. This preference puts him to no difficulty or trouble. His heart turns to God effortlessly, like an iron needle to the

magnet. Until now, may be he was a formal worshipper, but not now. In place of formality, a sense of freedom and ease begins to flow. There is love, confidence, joy and contentment in thinking of God. Like one's beloved, God becomes an endearing person. With that, the devotion generates in him enough of vigour, thrills and delights. Devotional pursuit was perhaps a religious routine and effort earlier, but now it is a pleasing affair of the heart and mind.

As the new note of devotion grows further, he becomes more and more of a devotee, not so much the worldly person. In everything he does, thinks and acquires, physical or mental, God becomes the one great imprint. The basic content of his life will be God, Godliness. He intends to realize and manifest it more and more.

Such an one, a true devotee no doubt, marks an exception to the usual run of worshippers and seekers. His status is the highest. That is why I say 'he is in Me, and I am in him'. Like the lover and his beloved, in actual life and actions, by the very note of his devotion, he and I tend to become one.

In other words the human mind of his rises to the divine level. The normal mind, with its worldly pulsations, dissolves progressively to evolve into the Godly dimension. Naturally it gains and reveals a lot of rare, divine potentials. From such divine minds, from the lofty devotees, does the world witness many supernormal features. On many occasions, you will find whatever they wish becomes true, as if for no special reason or intention, often to the astonishment of the others.

To live in the company of such great devotees, of pure and wholesome minds, is a great privilege for the others. In fact, those devotees alone represent and reveal God, if at all. God is not a visible entity, and so Arjuna, how can you interact with Him

closely ? The entire knowledge of God is what the true devotees have known and revealed. Arjuna, the spiritual fate of any society is determined by the number of such devotees, what they do and teach by their lives.

To be pleased with them is to be pleased with Me. To displease them will also be to displease Me. Through them alone will the door of salvation be opened. A blessing and protection from them is really a great privilege, a succour to the afflicted lot of mankind. In them shines constantly the strong ray of hope and promise for every one spurned by the world or fate at any time. Great are the potentials they hold out for the earnest and humble men and women, to achieve lofty ends useful to oneself and the others alike. Arjuna, what is there strange in my saying that I live in such graceful souls, as do they live in Me? But for them, how will I be known, felt and realized?

So blessed and rewarding is the pursuit of devotion! Now, let me tell you, in this great path, so assuring and fulfilling, no one in the whole mankind is excluded from adopting. Don't think that only the chosen few can have entry into this path. Neither one's own heredity, nor acquisition in the manner of vice or sin, will stand as an adverse factor in the devotional efforts. People generally talk of sin and sinfulness a great deal. They hold that sinfulness stands in the way of one's approach to Divinity. Many plead themselves against it on the ground of *paapa* (sin), as an escape to keep away from making devotional endeavours. But this is not correct:

*Api chetsuduraacharo bhajate maam ananyabhaak
Sadhureva sa mantavyah samyakvyavasitho*

hi sah

*Kshipram bhavati dharmaatma saswat saantim
nigachati*

*Kounteya pratijaaneehi na me bhaktah
pranasyati*

Suppose one has incurred a great deal of sin in his life. May be he also lacks a favourable holy heredity—that is to say he has nothing by the way of virtue from his parents and others as an inheritance. What do you think of such an individual? Neither heredity nor acquisition stands as a credit to help him. So he is the most unfavourably placed amongst mankind. Does it mean that devotional life is incompatible with him, his nature and tendencies and he cannot qualify himself to be anywhere in the devotees' group in his life time?

I have a clear answer to give on this question. My answer is that there is nothing at all which can prevent a man from embracing the redeeming path of devotion at any time. Any objection raised by any one is born out of ignorance about the truth of devotional life and its effectiveness. In his case it is a simple question of making the right choice, and doing so as soon as he can. What is there if one is sinful by nature, by his actions? In a broader sense, every individual has a measure of sinfulness at any time of his life. I have already taught you about the *dwandwa* nature of the entire world, the creation. Human life is particularly *dwandwa*-ridden. The net moral count of the entire *dwandwas* brings in virtue and vice, holiness and unholiness. By the very fact of one's birth, his life becomes subject to these effects. So, Arjuna, is there any one who can claim absolute freedom from sin?

Therefore, the thought of sin as a unfavourable or preventing factor in taking to devotion is a foolish one. On the other hand, the thought of sin must act as a greater motivation for anyone to seek redemption through devotional thoughts and practices. The thoughts at any time, even during the most trying moments of life, must be progressive, not retrogressive. Herein lies the secret of human success. As I have said earlier, to lift oneself up, as also to push oneself down, both lie equally within

one's spiritual freedom. The question always is what in particular does one do. Does he make the right decision, the right choice?

So if one has made the right choice to pursue the path of devotion, in spite of whatever his demerits are, then he should be considered a holy individual. Arjuna, real holiness consists in generating the thoughts of God and then abiding by those thoughts as much as possible. Actions are external. What operate internally in man first and last are his thoughts. When thoughts have begun to change their nature, purity corresponding to that change will also begin to register itself spontaneously. May be it will take some length of time before the purity born of his new thoughts starts to manifest in his actions. But this is the case with every one in the world. How is then the man of sinfulness any exception?

He is therefore a noble soul, simply because of his right and noble decision. Often the people, who do not have any such stock of sinfulness, remain deluded, as they do not make any worthy decision about improving the quality of their life and become noble. The customary measure of virtue, the usual dose of religious merit satisfies them, and with that they get lost in the glitters of the world and their enjoyment. How will you compare, Arjuna, their lot then with that of the man, who in spite of his sinfulness has resolved well to become a noble devotee?

I even feel that sinfulness is an indirect blessing, if it drives one thus to seek the path of devotion. If the virtuous, for their own limited thinking, deny to themselves the reward of supreme devotion, then is virtue really praiseworthy, judged devotionally? On the other hand, look at the one who has the feeling that he is sinful and hence decides to follow the path of devotion with extreme sincerity and wholesomeness?

That is why I said 'he is well-resolved' (*sam yak-vyavasi'ch h*). Ere long, his devotional thoughts, feelings and emotions will lead, compel him to the path of *dharma*, the path of noble selections, and he submits his actions to the codes of morality, ethics, individual and social welfare. From roughness and excesses he guides himself to the path of refinement and moderation. Like his noble thoughts, his actions too become pure and benevolent. He becomes a favourite of the better section of the people, and in the company of like-minded lofty souls. His virtue and morality increase further and further. Every time he thinks of his previous conduct, he feels a greater impetus to be more holy and pious. The memory tending to strengthen his resolve, the delight of the present pursuit giving him greater assurance and inspiration, both together acting as mutual compliments, he is led further and further to the heights of devotion and finally gets crowned with the last stroke of supreme blessing, namely perpetual *santi* (peace) and the sense of immortality. While the ordinarily virtuous people are still bound by the fetters of virtue, the sense of release and redemption lurking somewhere high above, this devotee realizes the intrinsic freedom of his soul, the supreme felicity born of its immortal nature, in this very life. Suppose a cave lies in darkness for decades without seeing any light whatsoever. If even a small flame of a lamp is brought there, the decades-old darkness vanishes, and the whole place becomes clear and luminous. This is the case, Arjuna, with one who takes with delight and promise to the supreme, exclusive devotion to Me.

Any emotion is instantaneous in its effect. Love is all the more so. Devotion, I should say, is even further effective both in the attraction and delight it produces and the purification it works out. That is why even the most sinful of the lot of seekers gets full redemption before long by pursuing the path of devotion. Arjuna, you may swear on My behalf that the one who is heartily devoted to God will never meet degradation or

Memorable Three Days

This time when Swamiji come to Jamshedpur in February, after Telco programmes he wished that we should stay with him at Sri. Madhavan's place for a few days. We readily agreed, for it was not only Swamiji's desire but also of the Madhavans for a long time.

The three days we spent in the divine presence of our Gurudev were the most memorable in our life, similar to the retreat we attended at Sri. Nambiar's place in Kerala. The experience was thrilling and it cannot be expressed in words. Swamiji slept for hardly three to four hours in a day and the

destruction. Never will he be led astray or go blind in his ways. If only he can tune his heart towards Me, without any reservation or doubt, he will remain safe and strong throughout. For all ills of the mind, all doubts of the intellect, for all agitations caused by emotions, exclusive devotion is the final solution. It is merely a question of being earnest and whole-some in taking up the pursuit and furthering it in every way, at every step.

Without devotion to strengthen and safeguard the mind and intellect, Arjuna, the human individual will not find his life in the world successful and complete, rendering him true delight and fulfilment. With devotion properly cultured, however complex and challenging your life may be, you will still find your way safe. It will reward you variously, filling you with more and more virtues and blessings. Who then, Arjuna; can possibly think of denying himself the security and nourishment provided by the thoughts and pursuit of supreme devotion?

(to be continued)

rest of the time was spent in discussions, discourses and in meeting people. People from all walks of life, viz., housewives, fathers, mothers, teachers, students, doctors, engineers, businessmen, administrators, came to meet him with their problems. It was a sight to watch Swamiji listening to their woes patiently and lovingly advising them. He is not only a saint but also a doctor, an engineer, a professor, a psychiatrist, a father and mother, all in one. Those who came with a multitude of problems went back smiling, and the tears they shed were of joy and ecstasy. What a sudden transforming and miraculous healing effect words of wisdom have!

One of the incidents I witnessed was when a junior engineer came to meet Swamiji. He was intelligent but very arrogant in his attitude. He was very proud and egoistic. Evidently there was no harmony in his household because of his superiority complex and unyielding nature. He was shooting many questions at Swamiji, in not a very polite language. Swamiji's thundering replies for the next fifteen minutes completely silenced him, and he looked like a lamb in the presence of a lion! Swamiji's talk shook him to the core and he had to admit that he had never before heard such a talk of wisdom. He had no more questions to ask. I have no doubt that he returned a more matured individual, and I am sure that when Swamiji comes next time he will find this man's family more harmonious and peaceful. We witnessed a number of such incidents which made us dumbfounded for quite some time.

For me personally, Swamiji was more than all these, and I felt that he was pouring much more love and affection than I deserved. When I came back to my routine life on the Monday morning after seeing Swamiji off at the railway station, I found that Swamiji not only looked after Yoga but also the Kshema (welfare) of his devotees. Due to his grace a miracle happened, otherwise a disaster might have come. For an ordinary

Sacred Guru Poornima

All of you must be knowing well the sacredness of the Gurupoornima Day. This year it falls on the 19th of July.

Vyasa Dev is the person to whom the authorship of most of the important Hindu religious literature is ascribed. In the Hindu literature, the Upanishads belonging to the Vedas are the most important and final. The truths of the Upanishads lie scattered. In order to correlate them and present them in their natural sequence, Vyasa Dev composed the Brahma Sutras. He began the composition, according to tradition, on the Guru Poornima Day. Ever since that time, Guru Poornima has remained greatly sacred for the Hindus, people of Bharat. They conduct special worship and prayers on that day. Those devoted to penance and *sadhana*, observe special vows for a period of 3 months commencing from the Guru Poornima Day.

For the practisers of Brahma Vidya, the importance and holiness of Guru Poornima and the quarter-year period following that cannot be overstressed. The entire Nature is beaming with rythm and cycles. The year is a cycle. So too the month. The half-year and the fortnight are equally so. The week and

person it may mean an accidental escape, but I feel it is the divine invisible hands of Swamiji that protected me. For various reasons the incident cannot be narrated here. The reward of faith is to experience what we believe and that has happened. I am very shy of publicity and am writing these few lines only for the benefit of our loving friends.

— *Rajagopal*

the day too are not different. Every unit of time, every form of existence, in order to become so must have some rythm and cyclicity with it.

In revolving round the sun, the earth reveals a cycle of its own. The moon too does so in its own way. Every other planet is like the earth and the moon in this respect.

Take the case of man or any other *jeevi* (living creature) and see whether there is any rythm or cycle in his expressions. The day breaks with sun's light spreading all around. With that man wakes up. Until then his mind was remaining inactive and still. His body too was not active, as it was until he slept. But suddenly at daybreak, the mind wakes up and his awareness starts functioning intensely. The day passes off in continuous activity. The evening sets in and following it the night. Then the mind and the body withdraw from their active spell, thus preparing themselves to go to rest.

Next morning and every next day, the same phases and sequence repeat. Thus each day rolls on, to make a month, then a year, a decade and so on. And finally a lifetime.

Thus it is always our nature, as also the nature of everything else born of Nature, to conform to some cycle and rythm or the other in every walk of our life. This is how we come to celebrate the birth and the death anniversaries in our household and country.

While taking up the *adhyatmic* life and *sadhana*, it is natural that you conform to a certain cycle of practice. The Gurupoornima marks the commencement of the period of the year, suitable to intensify the spiritual enquiry and *tapasya* of our people. You can say that the quarter beginning from the Gurupoornima Day is the *adhyatmic* season of the year. The

religious and spiritual souls make it a practice to take to some systematic and rigorous *sadhana* during this period. Generally the summer season ends and the rainy season commences. The wet months will continue until October. The atmosphere will remain wet and cool, also purified in a way, during these months. So you can sit comfortably in a room or any other place and do *japu*, meditation and other *thapasya*.

May this day augur well for all of you. Those who are already practising Brahma Vidya should do their *sadhana* with greater vigour. In order to reinforce your faith and understanding, you should read the spiritual texts of your choice once or more during this period. With the passage of time, it is usual for our memory to grow weak. Most of the things we have learnt and known will slip from our active awareness. That is why seasonal repetition of reading and *manana* is enjoined. Even *sanyasins* and *Mahatmas* make it a point to remain tied up to a place, their hermitage, and either alone or in the company of other spiritual souls, they read and discuss the *prasthaanathraya* (the Bhagavad Geetha, Upanishads and Brahma Sutras) during the *chaaturmasya* (the four months of heavy rain).

So far as you, the devotees, are concerned, I would like you to assemble in a place every week, at least once, for 2 hours and then read a few chapters of the Geetha. Read also the Upanishads, Mundaka and Katha in particular, the themes of which should be now familiar to you. It is better to avoid discussion. Leave the discussion part and do the *manana* yourself alone other times. Read or recite the verses jointly, one of you leading and the others following. If you are able to develop a taste for recitation, it will be a substantial spiritual gain. The entire body, the nervous system and the conscious and sub-conscious awareness within the body will be ingrained with the vibrations and ideas contained in what you recite. It is

these impulses or influences that will come to your rescue during the life and activities from then on. So at least let this wet period of the year wet your being with the cool spiritual waters dropping from the heavens within.

Guru Poornima is always associated with the Guru, the adoration and reverence which the devotees and disciples foster towards the Teacher. In all spheres of our life and activity, the need for a teacher is inevitable. The new born child learns to talk and walk by observing its parents' speech and gait. In the absence of the parents acting the role of the Guru for their child, the latter would not be able to walk or talk. Similarly, the method of holding the pen and writing with it on paper is to be learnt by every boy or girl from somebody who already knows the art. The same principle can be extended to all the other spheres of activity.

While all the normal kinds of knowledge and activity relate to the *pratyaksha* (seen) world and objects, the adhyatmic or spiritual sphere pertains to the Soul or Atma, which is something entirely *apratyaksha*, imperceptible to the senses. Being so, the role which the Teacher or the Guru has to play therein, becomes supremely important. That is why, our Sastras declare strongly in more than one place that the guidance, initiation and help of the Guru is the deciding factor in the path of spirituality, of Self-seeking. Except from the lips of a merciful and wise Guru, how can an aspirant come to know that there is the soul immortal, blissful and unconditioned encased in the body?

So the Guru has always remained the most respected word with all Brahma Vidya sadhakas, ever since the dawn of the adhyatmic (spiritual) civilisation in Bharat. Naturally the Guru-poornima Day has become very sacred day for them. On this day the sadhakas make it a point to go to the Guru, if possible,

worship his feet and beget his hearty blessings. Those mature for receiving the spiritual initiation, generally choose this day for the purpose. Many inspired sadhakas *renounce* and become recluses on this blessed day. However, suffice it to say that the Guru Poornima is a supremely sacred day for all spiritual persons and as such it should not be allowed to pass without some special invocations being made for obtaining the Grace of the Guru.

The worship of God Almighty, the Ishta (the chosen diety) is very popular among the religionists and devotees. For zealous devotees, God is the protector, sustainer, nay everything. But when one steps into the field of spirituality and starts struggling for salvation, there is an inevitable shift in his outlook. Guru takes the place of his Ishta. This is especially so in the case of those who have been duly initiated into the Brahma Vidya path. The attitude of looking at the Guru, as the devotee does, as his Personal God helps the seeker immensely, enables him to progress fast in his path and attain fulfilment. Our Sastras even go to the extent of saying that the knowledge or realization obtained by any one, independently, without the proper guidance and care of a duly qualified Brahma-nishtha Guru, is useless. Any one with such knowledge and realization has to be considered a *moorkha* (idiot).

Brahmajnaana is, unlike the so many other kinds of knowledge, to be achieved through a practical process of experience and becoming. It has to express itself in one's actions, attitudes, etc. It is knowledge that cuts at the very root of all our understanding. So far as religious understanding and ritualism go, they are diametrically opposed to one another. As such, in the matter of comprehending *Brahmagyana* and then in giving expression to it, the seeker may face a number of doubts and contradictions.

The instance of Arjuna, when he stood ready for battle in Kurukshetra, is itself a monumental example. If you read Geetha, you will find a number of conflicting remarks and tenets. But they are not really so, if you understand them in the true spiritual background. This is one reason why the Guru is considered indispensable in one's spiritual life, realization of truth and fulfilment.

Another reason for extolling the place of the Teacher is the personal influence he exerts on the disciple in various ways. The knowledge of Truth will shine only when the Knower becomes a treasure-house of the best of virtues. Virtues are first to be known and recognized as meritable and then to be practised with assiduity and piety. In the absence of sound virtues, the knower will be as bad as any one else. In the Sastras, you will find the Demons Hiranyakasipu, Ravana and such other persons giving sermons on the immortality of the soul. But will you accept them as ideal Teachers?

On many occasions, therefore, a true seeker and disciple will require to be corrected, restrained and modulated. Who else than an acceptable teacher can and will do it?

At the same time, the devotion developed towards the person of the Guru sometimes proves too troublesome. The devotion should not be an attachment, say for instance like that of the Vraja women towards Krishna. You require to show reverence to the Guru, listen to his words of advice, practise them and become like him or even more glorious. All the sentiments and feelings that the disciples have towards the Guru must be made use of to this end.

Sankara has in the following verse described how significant is the role that a Guru plays in the matter of redeeming man's soul :

Janmaanekasathai sadaadarayuju bhakthiyaa
samaaraadhitho
Bhakthair-vaidikalakshanena vidhinna
santhushta eesah swayam
Saakshaat sree Gururoopamethya kripaya
drig-gocharah san prabhuhu
Thatwam saadhu vibodhya thaarayati thaam
samsaara-duhkhaarnavaat

The ardent devotees try to propitiate God, Almighty, by means of deeds and religious worship, as prescribed in the Sastras. They do so consecutively for hundreds of lives (*janmaas*). Then the Lord becomes pleased with them. Intending to save the devotee's soul from the misery of worldly life, He assumes a perceptible human form and appears before the devotee, for the purpose of enlightening him about the secret of the immortal soul and thereby bestowing upon him salvation and bliss. Such a perceptible form is the Guru.

It is the duty of each seeker of Truth, every aspirant, to correctly understand the place of the Teacher and then make use of the Teacher's contact and association properly. Mere worship of anything whatever, the Guru included, will not be sufficient. If you are to benefit from the presence and association of the Guru, you have to listen to his words of advice, assimilate them and practice them in every possible way.

Remember, salvation lies within you always. The way of seeking and attaining it is through purification and wisdom.

Hari om Tat Sat.

A letter from Mataji

Dear M. B. & children,

Mother's blessings to you all. Swamiji reached here, told me the news about all of you. It is enough if all of you are living peacefully. May all goodness and peace descend on your lives.

You would have known by now what is the real goal of human life. There is only one true aim for every one in the world—the attainment of lasting peace. To gain this, constant effort is required. Suppose a number of articles are lying scattered in a room in your household, how irritating the sight will be! When all of them are arranged properly, and the whole place is cleaned up well, how pleasing the same room will become?

The same is the case with our mind, the thoughts, which run helter-skelter. To collect all the thoughts, arrange them in an order and see that the mind is engaged in a proper direction, is the real purpose of spiritual effort. Unnecessary and unimportant thoughts should be set aside and in their place good and noble ones should be installed. Steadily these noble thoughts must be strengthened. Only by *vichara*, right enquiry, will this be possible. After a time, we will get the fruit called *jnana*. Only when we begin to taste it will we derive peace too.

Do not unduly worry over the so many events which have taken place in the past. Let not your mind be bitten unnecessarily by their memories. Whatever help we do to the others, may be the others do not remember it at all, but certainly the joy of having rendered help in time should bring us true satisfaction.

Even the thought that 'I have done some help' must finally go away. All beings live equally upon the same God. To live helping and co-operating with one another is the minimum duty of the humans. Quarrels and fights are repugnant to humanhood. From every experience, outer and inner, we have to learn a good deal. If at all, we may try to avoid those incidents whose memory puts us to misery. At the same time, if there are instances which when brought again to the mind will give us delight, or will help us to correct and improve our thoughts and ways, it is better that we recollect them now and then. Otherwise, repeated indulgence in the past is not useful.

The world is no doubt the revelation of God, God's form. Even when one reaches the mental state that all forms of existence are really One, the discriminate use of things, like that of pure water and impure water, should continue. For drinking we always need pure water. The world, its display, is the touch-stone to test the quality and merit of one's self-experience. Only when one rubs his experience with the actual facts of life in the world, the wonder of creation will rightly be known.

Truly there is a whole world within ourselves. That is the Divine world, the kingdom of heaven. There, experiencing a delight that transcends name and form, one can dissolve himself in the Reality of Brahman. In the outer world, which is equally Its own manifestation, we can remain deluded, seeking the delights of the senses and drinking the muddy water of enjoyments. One is the pure and holy Ganges, the other is the same water but contaminated and putrified by the external corruptions. This is the difference. Water is there in both.

Therefore, do every time what you feel like doing or what you are expected to do for one reason or another, to all the people, including relatives, without expecting any thing, even an expression of gratitude! Try to remain contented. Have a full sense of gratitude towards the Creator, the Almighty, who alone is to be pleased in the end. For having given you an occasion

Prana Chinthana

(A reference to the above has been made in YOGA VASISHTA. Though Sage Vasishtha was well aware of all details, he enquired of Shri Bhoosunda to explain Prana Chinthana and Pranayama. The points mentioned below are from Shri Bhoosunda's explanation).

"The so-called spiritual heart shines as a full bloom lotus in the centre of the body. In it and through it, the *Praana* and *Apnaana* (out-going and in-coming breaths) always move, the former above the heart centre and the latter below. Their course, I always observe and follow. I do not even for a second live without the knowledge of their movements. This state—constant and continuous remembrance and association with *Praana* movement is termed 'Prana Chinthana'.

These two *vaayus* (breaths) are always in action and it is not incorrect to term them as the Sun and the Moon of the *Hridayaakaasa*. They by themselves move both inside and

and means to discharge your obligations or to extend a service to the others, be ever indebted to Him.

I do think at times of the past, especially of some of the more important actions and events. The memory brings to me both the sides of the whole subject. Many things are there which have helped improve my life, elevate my thoughts.

After seeing you at D., mentally I have never become separate. Not only that, I now feel like one of the two persons, having come together at the end of a long separation. Many events of our past come to my mind now with their own unique impact, and no doubt with a definite charm. With blessings again, which you may convey to the other devotees as well.

— Amma.

outside the body. The *Praana* moves in an upward direction while the *Apaana vaayu* moves in the opposite way. As I follow their movements in sleep, dream and waking stages, I have become purified of all *vaasanas* and therefore I remain as if in *sushupthi* stage. The movements of these *vaayus* are very subtle and consequently difficult to be identified because the movements are finer than the thinmost thread of a lotus flower. For this reason, persons who are only body-conscious will find it extremely difficult to trace these movements.

The *Praana vaayu* emanates from the *Hridayapīḍma*, moves up, and through the nose proceeds to an approximate distance of twelve inches. There it subsides. At that stage, the *Apaana vaayu* rises and enters the body and moves in a downward direction to the heart centre. When the *Apaana vaayu* subsides and at that stage, if it dissolves in the *Praana* or the *Praana* merges with the *Apaana* and becomes one, one enters into the *Kaivalya* stage where no sadness or *duḥkha* of any nature can affect the person. Just in the middle of *Praana* and *Apaana* at their meeting point is consciousness, 'a. *Chit Ananda*. Those who understand this and realise it, will no more have the fear of re-birth. Therefore, I adore and worship the consciousness placed in between the *Praana* and *Apaana* at all times. Oh Sage Vasishta, death can therefore never approach me".

Some of the points mentioned by Shri Bhoosunda in his reply to Sage Vasishta are mentioned above. We are breathing at all times. The *Praana* and *Apaana vaayus* perform in the same way as explained by Shri Bhoosunda. What requires to be done is to focus our attention at the meeting point of these two *vaayus* in our normal waking hours. All seekers have some free time now and then on all days, and if they try to spend at least these occasions, in an absolutely effortless manner, focussing their mind on the meeting point of these two *vaayus*, out-going and in-coming breaths, they will certainly be in communion with the Self and perhaps it may prove to be one of the most effective *Sadhanas*.

— a *Sadhaka*.

A Dialogue on God's Will - 9

(Continued from the page 9 of April '78 issue)

Is nobility ineffective?

Seeker: I understand the point, a doubt still comes to my mind. The noble and the virtuous do have untold strength within them. They can also manifest it if they so resolve. But is not their strength solely mental? How far can their mind's strength outwit the physical strength of the ignoble, vicious? If the virtuous mind is assailed by the vicious mind; noble thoughts are fought by ignoble ones, the virtuous will triumph finally in the combat. All right. But that is no victory, if the ignoble choose to suppress their opposite numbers, using their physical prowess. There are also instances of this nature where the most noble persons have been imprisoned or punished by other means for what they held to be right and proper for ensuring human welfare. What kind of resistance can they, in such circumstances, make? Their resistance, at best mental in nature, will not mean anything. Many noble souls, who did not submit to the whims of the ignoble despot, had even to lose their life, for that was the reward their staunch attitude meant before their adversary. How is this situation to be explained? Am I to think that virtue and the virtuous should not be judged, for their merit, on the basis of an extreme outcome it warrants in this manner?

Knower: Very good, your question is quite in place. The points it raises must be kept in mind by one and all in society. More so, when they try to understand the complex issue of morality and what it means in actual life in the context of the society in front.

The maximum a man of vice can do, flouting all laws of nature, especially those governing the human mind and its incorrigible impact, is to use his physical might and suppress, at a bodily level, the virtuous and their free movements. When he tries to quell all his opposition and make it ineffective,

so far as he is concerned, he is in fact doing this kind of an act. My dear son, morality is the science dealing with the mind, its nature, scope and effects. In morality we only discuss what a virtuous mind can and will mean to the individual and to the society of his. The discussion is absolute and valid for what it is true and worth.

Our emphasis is on the way the mind thinks, and what its thoughts can bring, in spite of whatever the thinker aims at or wishes to achieve. Are vicious thoughts and nature rewarding? In contrast, what is the fate of virtue and the virtuous? When notoriously confronted by vice and the vicious, will virtue perish once for all? Is it that the virtue we know of can thrive and triumph only when everything around is favourable and encouraging? In that case, the virtuous one can ensure only his own virtue, and he can hold little influence on the others around. As virtue appeals to him, vice may appeal to some others. What will then become of him, especially when the vicious turns extremely inimical to virtue and its votaries?

This is the intricate question which the seekers of virtue will seek enlightenment on from time to time. The more the confrontation the greater is the urge to know their own fate.

You have raised the instance of the most noble individuals being treated barbarically by the ignoble rulers or the others in power, disabling them from moving and acting with freedom, even to the full ignorance of the others in the society. Well. This is the last phase of fate the noble people of a society can meet in the hands of the society's own numbers. Human society at any time is an exemplary mixture of 'opposites'. The virtuous have always to live in the midst of the vicious. And the vicious themselves are very divergent in their thoughts and activities. Some amongst them also go to the extremes of temper and cruelty in trying to win their own aims and needs. And what do they get ultimately? What can they, any time, in the world of ours?

The moral thinker has found his unmistakeable answer to the question. In fact, the science of morality will not serve

its purpose in full unless it is able to dispose of this doubt with clarity and assurance. I can say this point occupied our people even in the oldest of times, when social life was more individualistic than today, and the opposition to the moralist was more frequent and various than it is like in the present.

The instance of Kamsa, the uncle of Sree Krishna, is the story which comes to my mind as an illustration for the truths of a moral life. Kamsa had a lot of love and affection for his sister, Devaki. He was taking Devaki and her husband after the wedding to the husband's home, driving the chariot himself, as a mark of his extreme regard for the sister. Everything was fine on the way, but suddenly the atmosphere became tense. Disturbing the skies came up a loud voice from nowhere, spelling fear and distress to Kamsa, for it said 'the child to be born as the eighth to this sister of yours will be, O villainous soul, the God of Death (Yama, Kaala) for you. Keep this in mind'.

This brief impersonal ethereal pronouncement was sufficient to rob Kamsa of all his humanness and throw him to the worst inhuman temper and propensities. Drawing his sword, he instantly raised it to behead his sister, seated behind him with her husband. Ah, in one moment all his affection fled, and fear and hatred filled his mind. By killing her right then, he thought, he would be able to rule out all chances for his enemy to be born in this world. But was it more than just a thought? For is not the mind making its master think in a myriad ways at the same time? Can it always, on all fronts, be moved by fear or enmity? Is there not equally a significant counter consideration too, to emerge from the same mind? Can anyone, the lord of what he calls 'his mind', be truly lordly in every way? Does it not have the power to defy him as he tries to deceive the others?

My dear son, the lessons on the story of the human mind upon the earth are many-sided. None should think that they end up here or there. As the universe of expanse before your eyes, the mental expanse behind your external vision, too, is unbounded and immeasurable in its content and complexity.

So in the seconds that followed Kamsa's fearful decision, he was obliged, by his own mind, to desist from the inhuman attempt. Vasudeva gave a word of promise that every time Devaki gave birth to an offspring, it would be handed over to Kamsa for doing whatever he wanted to. This was enough for Kamsa, for by then his mind was able to divide his thoughts into affection and hatred, both alike—affection to his sister, hatred towards the offsprings to be born of her. What to say about the logic and truth of it!

However, his affection remained assailed more and more as days passed. The line of safeguard he evolved was to usurp the throne to himself, imprisoning his father, so that he might have all the sovereignty to do things as he wished, and as his counsellors deemed wise. The next step was to keep both his sister and her husband under chains all along, so that they would not be able to escape from the prison-house.

But will all this be powerful enough to prevent the course of morality from finding its full expression, governed by its own laws and rules which no one, nothing, coming within the range of creation, can question or invalidate any time? The born man derives his birth and sustains his life in the created world. The world of his, first and last, belongs to a Source, which to this date has remained mysterious. Up to now he has not seen able to discover It, or pronounce a verdict on where it lurks or what It is constituted of. The more he thinks, the more does It reign unquestionable. Where is then the freedom and chance for any one to live in disharmony with It?

'Am I using the freedom which I have, I deserve to employ? Is the choice I have made or am making, the one becoming of me, as of the others? The judgement I make is not to be my own, but of one and all, the voice of Justice and Propriety itself! In determining this voice I cannot be dishonest. Can I befool myself, or make pretences? My not seeing the truth does not prevent the others from seeing it. This apart, the one Eternal Seer behind me and the others in the world no doubt sees all the while. The created beings alone go blind and deaf, if at all, but not their Creator, the Lord!

(to be continued)

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